

The 2026 Payroll Compliance Checklist for Australian Employers

Twelve checks worth running before your next pay run.

Now that intentional underpayment is a criminal offence in Australia, "we didn't realise" is no longer a defence worth relying on. Most underpayment is not deliberate. It comes from complex awards applied by busy payroll teams. This checklist covers the places errors most often hide.

- ☐ **1. Award and agreement mapping.** Every employee tied to the correct Modern Award or Enterprise Agreement, at the right classification level.
- ☐ **2. Current base rates.** Rates updated for the latest Fair Work annual wage review, effective from 1 July.
- ☐ **3. Penalty rates.** Weekend, public holiday and evening or night penalties applied exactly as the award specifies.
- ☐ **4. Overtime.** Correct thresholds, for example after 38 hours, with the right multipliers.
- ☐ **5. Casual loading.** The 25% loading applied, and its interaction with penalty rates handled in the right order.
- ☐ **6. Allowances.** First aid, laundry, tools, travel, meal and broken-shift allowances identified and paid.
- ☐ **7. Minimum engagement and breaks.** Minimum hours per shift and the required rest breaks between shifts.
- ☐ **8. Superannuation.** The current Super Guarantee rate (12% from 1 July 2025), paid on ordinary time earnings and on time.
- ☐ **9. Leave and entitlements.** Annual leave loading, personal leave accrual and long service leave tracked correctly.
- ☐ **10. Record keeping.** Time and wage records kept for seven years, and payslips issued within one day of pay.
- ☐ **11. Multi-role staff.** Anyone working more than one role paid the correct rate for each.
- ☐ **12. Change management.** A process to update payroll whenever an award changes or a person's role changes.

Want this checked automatically, every pay run? FairCheck sits over the payroll you already use and checks each run against the correct award or agreement before anyone is paid. Join the early-access waitlist at faircheck.com.au.

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